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ART. IX. — *Audubon's Biography of Birds.*

Ornithological Biography. Vol. II. By JOHN JAMES AUDUBON. Boston. 1835.

OUR readers, we doubt not, will join with us in giving a hearty welcome to the gentle lover of nature, who returns, after an absence of four years, ready to rédeem the promise which was given in his former volumes. We have heard of him at times from the icy regions of Labrador, and the burning sands of Florida, countries sufficiently distant from each other in reality, but standing side by side in the history of his unwearied adventure. Wherever he goes, the good wishes of many go with him; and though he may not hear the cheering of their voices, it may be a gratification to him to be assured, on our critical authority, that there are intelligent persons, not a few, who feel a deep interest in all his enterprises, and rejoice in his success. The measure of success which has thus far attended him, is certainly enough to encourage him. His fame, as an enthusiastic, penetrating and scientific observer, is established beyond all cavil; he has secured, moreover, what is better than respect, and that is the sympathy and regard of his readers; whatever his success in other points may be, this consciousness, which he cannot but have, of the affectionate interest which follows him, will make other rewards, should he gain them, doubly welcome, and console him under reverses, should they chance to come.

What the circulation of his work may be, — an earthly consideration, it is true, but one which cannot be disregarded in this world of dollars and cents, — we do not profess to know. We are glad, however, to hear him say, that his own country is now affording him a support equal to that of Europe. It was not so in the beginning; and had he not received encouragement abroad, his great enterprise might have been delayed for years. That encouragement was freely given, and he has, as he ought, freely and warmly acknowledged it. But far from regretting this circumstance, we are glad to see that the spirit of science, like that of Samaritan benevolence, makes of no account the boundaries which separate nations, and regards the honor of all such enterprises as belonging, not to a particular region, but to the whole intellectual world. Where property is so equally divided as it is in our country, there are not many who are able to buy such expensive volumes; prob-

ably there are more now, who can afford this expense, than there were twenty years ago, who were able to answer the humbler claims of Wilson; but in that day as well as this, those who had wealth in their possession, were men who had earned it by their own exertions; and who, in the course of their exertion, had slender means and chances for forming such tastes, as would enable them to estimate and take an interest in undertakings, which were not recommended by a utility more obvious to common eyes.

When Wilson's name is mentioned, we are at once reminded of his hardships and discouragements; it seems as if Audubon was a fortunate man, thus to have the path broken before him, and made comparatively easy to his feet. But things are not always as they appear to common observers. Audubon has had his discouragements to contend with, as many and as serious perhaps as those of Wilson, though not so easily understood. The resistance of outward circumstances, is a difficulty which all such men are prepared to meet; they expect to find obstacles thrown in their way by the indifference of others; they know, that it is not reasonable to expect to find such tastes already existing, but that it must be part of their labor to form them; and as for money, they are well aware, that if such resources abounded, the kind of self-created necessity which drives men to exertion, would in all probability be wanting. Human hearts must be more open than they are now to human eyes, before one man can undertake to pronounce upon the happiness, or even the good fortune of another; and in the case of such men as these, particularly, the joys and sorrows flow not from things that are seen, but from fountains within the breast. If Audubon is to be regarded as a more fortunate man than Wilson, it is because his disposition is more cheerful and social, and such as enters with readier sympathy into the cares of those about him; for though Wilson was one of the most generous of men, he was reserved in manner, and slow to express his feelings, except to an intimate few. But, after all, we believe that the greatest happiness of the determined naturalist, is to be found in his surrender of soul, his deep devotion to his favorite pursuit. And here they were equal; both successfully explored the forests, mountains and shores of America; both snatched the fearful joy of wandering beyond the limits of civilization, with no other companion than their dog and gun; both saw their fires

lighting up woods, and shining in waters, which never before felt the presence of cultivated man, where the rose-breast sung them to repose at night and the woodthrush waked them with its matin strains; if Audubon gained any thing in point of facility, by striking later upon the march, it was made up to Wilson, by the glory of moving in the van. There is, however, one point in which Audubon has been signally favored; and that is, the improvement in modern art, which has enabled the engraver to give so faithful copies of his own fine drawings from nature. It is true, there is a freedom and life in his own coloring, which the print can never possess; but compare him with Wilson, striving to make himself an engraver for the sake of accomplishing his design, and able to publish his work, only on condition of coloring the plates himself; here he was made to feel his own helplessness: but the result was, that the illustrations are the least important part of his work; he was compelled, not unfortunately for his own fame, to color in words, and no one ever managed them with more freedom, boldness and skill. While we give full credit to Audubon for his own life-like descriptions, we believe he will join with us in saying that this is a point in which Wilson cannot be exceeded.

We just now remarked, that Audubon had met with discouragements: but is it possible to stand in an enviable position, and not to be envied? Truly, this world must be very much altered, before such an unheard-of exemption can be enjoyed by any distinguished man. And to be the absolute sovereign of this department of nature; to know that one's works are admired in both worlds, and to feel that these works are the result, not merely of genius or happy discovery, but of honorable and weary labors; to see hoary heads nod their approbation, and bright eyes kindle, as this new revelation of the treasures of nature is spread before them, and more than all, to feel that one has extended the boundaries of things known, would be enough to sustain the spirit, under greater hardships than are often encountered. If we were inclined to break the tenth commandment, we should certainly covet the destiny of a naturalist, whose heart is in love with nature, and who has leisure to give to his favorite pursuit, the engrossing attention which it requires.

But there are some things which are more trying than depressing circumstances, and, to have one's veracity called in question is assuredly one of them. It seems that Audubon

had long suspected that birds, which, like the Black Vulture, feed on carrion, were guided to their banquet by the sense of sight and not of smell; in fact, that the latter sense was wanting or imperfect, — a defect which, considering the diet of such creatures, would be rather a blessing than a privation. Professor Jameson remarks, that he had suspected the same thing, from the accounts of birds in India, which move directly to their prey, though the wind bears the fragrance in an opposite direction from that in which they happen to be. When Audubon observed this, he immediately began a course of experiments, which we think must have made him wish that his own senses were reduced in number by at least one, but which established to his own satisfaction the fact, that the sense of sight was the means, by which these birds are assembled in such numbers wherever their table is spread. Upon this disclosure, which was first published in the *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, a warfare began between the eyes and the nose, similar to that which Cowper has recorded. The advocates of the nose accused Audubon of want of veracity in pleading the cause of the eyes. The charge was singularly absurd; since, had it been made clear that the nose was entitled to its former honors, what would it prove? Simply that he had been mistaken, and that some other observers were more correct than he. If a man build theories upon facts, then indeed, if his fabric be overthrown, his intellectual reputation is endangered; but if he merely aim at establishing facts, it is no dishonor to his mind, even if he should not succeed; and it is perfect nonsense to talk of his moral character being affected, one way or the other. But the question, such as it is, has been completely set at rest, by a series of experiments, conducted by some friends of Mr. Audubon. It was fully established, that the Vultures do not depend upon the sense of smell, which might destroy their appetite, while it leads them where they might indulge it. It was also made evident, that, contrary to vulgar prejudice, the Vulture's eye, sharp as it is, when once extinguished, cannot be restored; and in opposition to those who considered these birds epicures, it was shown, that it was matter of perfect indifference to them whether their meal was fresh, or in the early or latter stages of decay. We commend the zeal of these friends to science; it certainly was not for their own gratification, that they entered on such a course of experiments; but they thought and cor-

rectly, that it was not beneath the dignity of scientific investigation, to establish any fact, to remove any prejudice, or to defend any good man's reputation, however unworthily assailed.

We would not intimate, in what we have said, that Mr. Audubon betrays much solicitude to vindicate himself from this and similar charges. It is impossible to exhibit better taste than he has, in relation to such matters. He is profuse in his acknowledgments for acts of kindness and services, both great and small; but he says very little of the charges brought against him, knowing that his reputation is able to sustain itself, and that the public have, in general, but little interest in that kind of discussion. To that sagacious tribunal the longest and most laborious defences are apt to convey the impression of something which is not easily defended. Every man of conscious integrity, who repels charges in few words, and leaves it to time to do him justice, finds that time is not wanting to its trust; it is perpetually rendering this service to the injured,—both to the living and to the dead.

But where has the ornithologist been, since the first volume of his *Biography* was given to the world? He is as rapid in his motions as one of his own birds of passage; and he thinks so little of distance, that it is not always easy to trace the direction of his flight. After that publication in 1831, he came to this country, amply provided with letters to the British colonial authorities, from English noblemen and ministers. We are happy to find, too, that our own government stood ready to do its part. He received flattering attentions and offers of assistance from our civil and military officers, which were of essential service to him in his later expeditions. While at Washington, he was very much impressed with the error of Wilson, in writing to the president of his day, instead of presenting the living letter, by going himself to Washington. The letter sent by him never reached its destination; and, if it had, might have been thrown aside, together with those innumerable applications for appointments, with which the chief magistrate is perpetually besieged. If Mr. Jefferson had seen Mr. Wilson but for a few minutes, he would have singled him out from the herd of adventurers, and there cannot be a doubt that he would have aided him to the utmost of his power.

Mr. Audubon is not in the habit of losing time which he can employ to advantage. Shortly after his return from Eu-

rope, he proceeded to St. Augustine, in East Florida. He pursued his researches there as zealously as the winter would permit, but not with very encouraging success, when the schooner Spark came to St. Augustine, on her way to St. John's river. In consequence of letters from Washington, he and his assistants were received on board. No sooner had they entered the mouth of the stream, than his eyes were regaled with the objects which he most wished to see. The guns, fired at day-break to call the pilot from the shore, started thousands of snowy pelicans from their resting grounds, and sent them in graceful circles through the air. Thousands of cormorants were on the waters, and the fish-crows took the sound as a signal for beginning the labors of the day. The lovers of fine scenery would not find much to admire on the banks of this river, nor in any part of Florida. But it affords a good field for the naturalist, and this probably is the reason why everything should have seemed so rose-colored to Bartram; he thought the country worthy of its name, and so, botanically speaking, perhaps it is; but later travellers have found no paradise amidst its rocks and sands. The climate, which Volney pronounced the finest in the world, must, at times, be somewhat oppressive; since so early as the middle of February, Mr. Audubon found the mercury at 75° on the water, and 90° on the shore, and this in the evening of the day. There is something charming in the description of this winter evening. The fog hung so heavily on the stream, that the eye could not discern either shore, though it was not a mile wide. The moschetos covered everything, in such numbers, that they sometimes extinguished the candles in the cabin with heaps of martyrs; and that none of the senses might lose their share of delight, the zephyrs came heavily-laden with the odors from a slaughter-house on the shore. Let those who mourn over the severity of a northern winter, when the mercury seems sinking to the earth's centre, think of this description, and be comforted. The inconveniences of this earthly ball are more equally balanced than discontented man believes.

After several attempts to draw the portrait of an alligator, who was not inclined to sit, Mr. Audubon left the vessel to continue its voyage up the river, and returned to St. Augustine. His return gives a lively idea of the country. Leaving one of his attendants to take care of his baggage, he set off

on foot with the other. They had eighteen miles to go, and the sun was but two hours high. The country was level as a floor; the path was distinctly marked, having been trodden by the Indians for ages; here and there a rivulet offered them the means of quenching their thirst, and magnolias and other flowering shrubs varied the uniformity of the woods. But meantime, the sun went down in a cloud, the wind began to howl dismally through the tall pines, and a black mass of vapor, lifted from the east, spread itself over the whole heavens. The dog was for a long time their only guide in the darkness; heavy drops began to fall, and he at last became doubtful, and refused to proceed. The wind soon increased to a gale, — the lightning streamed through the heaven, occasionally setting fire to a pine, which shone magnificently bright in the darkness, — and the water rose so high on the level ground, as almost to cover their feet. While in this perplexity, they at length discovered the light of the beacon at St. Augustine, and were guided by it to their lodgings, where they arrived drenched with rain, steaming with perspiration, and covered to the knees with mud.

Tragical accidents often happen in Florida, in consequence of losing the way. Every one who has been bewildered in the woods, knows that the feeling is one which entirely destroys the moral and physical strength; the lost one is helpless as the dreamer in troubled sleep; "to stop too fearful, and too faint to go," he feels as if a resistless destiny was forcing him, almost with a visible grasp, to his doom. Mr. Audubon gives us an account of a "live-oaker," — the name of the men who are employed in cutting that valuable timber. Leaving his cabin one morning, in a fog, to proceed to the place of his labor, he found, when the fog cleared away, that all the objects about him were strange to his eyes. He retraced his steps, but in vain; the night found him in the unsounded depth of the woods. After a cold, dull, moonless night, he spent the next day in vain attempts to recover the path. The next night found him in agony and terror; and the following day brought no relief, except that he was able to destroy a turtle with his axe, and with savage desperation to eat the warm flesh, and drink the blood of his victim. In this manner, forty miserable days were passed, and he lay down on the banks of a river to die, when he was discovered by the crew of a boat, and restored to his home. He was

then at the distance of thirty-eight miles from his cabin, and had probably travelled more than ten times that distance, wandering in circles in the woods.

Toward the close of April, the season became more propitious to Mr. Audubon's enterprise. He then proceeded to Sandy-island, the southernmost cape of Florida, a great resort of birds. As they were on the way, the pilot conducted the boat into a thick shrubbery of mangroves, where they shot a multitude of pelicans. They shortly after saw hundreds of cormorants' nests, directly over their heads. When the party fired, nearly all the birds fell, as if dead, into the water, and the sportsmen were marvelling at the unexampled effect of their shot ; but the mystery was solved, when they saw the birds first peep cautiously out of the water, then rise upon the wing and fly away. In the morning, the night-heron and the owl were seen, retiring into the swamps, where none could follow ; the gulls and terns skimmed lightly through the air ; rose-colored curlews stalked under the mangroves ; purple herons started up before their steps ; gallinules and other water-fowl were on the waves, and every cactus supported a white ibis's nest. When the party had built a shed, and lay down to rest at night, the waters were almost at their feet ; when they rose in the morning, the beach was naked, and the waters at a vast distance, so level are these shores. Meantime, the birds could laugh at the disappointment of the ornithologist ; his boat was far enough from the sea, and no human foot could venture upon the vast fields of mud. He took his revenge upon the nests of the ibis ; the eggs supplied a delicious food, which the naturalist ate with becoming resignation, since nothing better could be done.

But a little time changed the scene ; when the tide rose a foot or two, the immeasurable plain was again covered with water. Then the birds were driven in towards the land, and the party fired on them with such effect, that they had soon thrown up a heap, like a haycock, of the dead. But when they were returning with their treasures, they had an opportunity of witnessing another exhibition of nature, which, situated as they were, in a small boat on the sea, was rather more curious than welcome. A black cloud suddenly folded the setting sun ; a low, murmuring sound was heard, and lightning shot from the cloud, which seemed as if it were chasing the boat for some purpose of revenge. The pilot quietly

said, "sit still, gentlemen; I should not like to lose you overboard just now; the boat can't upset, my word for that, if you will but sit still; here we have it!" In an instant, the wild hurricane struck the boat, and dashed it on the shore. The waters drifted like snow; the strong mangroves were bent to the earth, and washed by the waves which rose out of their bounds; the rain fell, not in drops, but masses. Such are the fierce winds which sometimes rage in tropical climates, carrying destruction with them over land and sea; on shore, destroying more in an hour than an age can repair; on the sea, making over many a gallant vessel to the mercy of the wrecker or the waves.

Mr. Audubon makes a remark with respect to his residence in Florida, which deserves to be remembered. He says, that while enduring constant hardship, and exposed to alternate heat and moisture, both by day and night, he and his party restricted themselves to fish and soaked biscuit for food, and drank nothing but water and molasses; believing, and no doubt correctly, that diseases would be produced by ardent spirits and more substantial food. What a change in men's views on this subject within a few years! Southey, in his life of Wesley, sharply censures General Oglethorpe, for prohibiting the use of ardent spirits in his colony, since they were necessary to health, and it was unreasonable to deprive the sober of an important luxury, because it was abused by a few. Jacquemont, the enterprising traveller in India, preserved his health by a course of prudence resembling that of Audubon; it is true that he fell a victim, at last, to the climate, but it appears to have been owing to a feeling of security, which grew out of his long exemption from disease. Unfortunate it was for that young man, that he had not something of that religious feeling, which ought to be inseparable from the love of nature, and which Audubon so happily expresses on proper occasions; a man of prudence, energy, fine intellect, and large attainments, making a boast of indecency and atheism, is a spectacle inexpressibly painful to every thoughtful mind. It seems impossible to doubt, that if moderate caution is observed, every climate of the earth may be inhabited, transiently or permanently, by travellers from every other. There is scarcely an instance of the death of foreign travellers, even in Africa, which may not be traced to some needless exposure. Every remark of an experienced traveller, that tends to

give right views of this subject, should be carefully treasured for the use of the world. Audubon says, that his party, and the officers who followed their example in respect to diet, never were troubled with so much as a headache, arising from the damps of night, or the noonday sun.

Mr. Audubon took an opportunity to visit the Tortugas, which are about eighty miles from Key West. They are low, uninhabitable banks, covered with shells and sand, and are resorted to by turtlers and wreckers; the former, aiming at profit, by affording the means of luxurious indulgence to epicures; the latter, engaged in enterprises which they are in no wise anxious to publish, either to the government or the world. The turtles are of four kinds, of which the green is considered the best for food. The hawk-billed stands next, in point of flavor; its shell is the one so much in demand. The loggerhead and trunk turtles are little sought for food, and are accordingly bold, compared with the others. The account which he gives of their habits is curious and interesting. They pass the winter in the deep waters, but in spring they approach the shores, not the Tortugas only, but the many sandy capes and islets of that region. On coming near, generally on clear moonlight nights, the turtle raises its head above the water, and attentively examines all around. Should it discover nothing unpropitious to its movements, it makes a loud, hissing sound, which alarms its enemies, and drives them from the spot. If all continue quiet, she advances slowly to the beach, and crawls over it, with her head raised, and her neck fully extended, till she has selected a place to deposit her eggs. She then scrapes a hole in the sand, to the depth of about two feet, a work which Mr. Audubon saw accomplished in nine minutes; and in this, she deposits the eggs, in regular layers, to the number of one hundred and fifty or two hundred. She then replaces the sand, and makes it so level with the rest of the beach, that the place cannot be detected except by an experienced eye. In order to secure these animals, the turtlers overset them on the beach, and sometimes in the water, though this is considered a hazardous operation. They are sometimes so large, that to throw them on their backs, requires the united efforts of several men. The animals are not unprovided with means of defence. One of the loggerhead species, which was brought on board the vessel, made, with its bite, an indentation in one of the flukes of the

anchor. The smaller turtles are the most valued. Mr. Audubon, in buying some for his friends, — we mean his feathered friends, — found that one weighing seven hundred pounds, cost but a trifle more than one of thirty. The turtlers take them in various ways, some of them cruel, but successful in proportion, and humanity is a thing but little regarded in matters like this. One thing, which Mr. Audubon relates on the authority of turtlers, is interesting, as an evidence of that mysterious reach of instinct, which appears in various animals. If a turtle is carried in a vessel several hundred miles from its favorite haunts, and then let loose in the ocean, it will be found in the spot from which it was taken, either immediately after, or certainly in the next spring.

While in Florida, Mr. Audubon took occasion to visit a celebrated spring, near the sources of St. John's river. It presents a circular basin, about sixty feet in diameter, from the centre of which the water rises with great apparent force, though not much above the general level. On the edges are deposited vast quantities of shells, gravel, pieces of wood, and other substances, which have gathered into masses. The water, though dark colored, is transparent, and so impregnated with sulphur, that the smell is offensive. Its depth is about seventeen feet. Not far from it was another in former times, which had, from some unknown cause, dried entirely away. The only use to which the waters are applied, is that of turning a mill, which grinds the sugar-cane of a neighboring plantation.

Mr. Audubon passed the summer of 1832 in Boston, devoting his time, however, not to society, but to those labors which are never remitted even so much as health requires. While here, he was seized with an illness, owing to his incessant application, which had nearly brought him to the grave. During his residence in Boston, he made an excursion into the British provinces, and the state of Maine. After exploring the woods at the eastern extremity of that state, he proceeded to St. John's; ascending the river of that name, he reached Frederickton, where the Governor, Sir Archibald Campbell, treated him with much regard. Wherever he went, he was attentive to every thing worth observing, even though it was not strictly within the line of his own profession. We cannot permit ourselves to pass over the testimony which he bears in favor of the lumberers of Maine. As a

lover of nature, he was delighted to witness their humanity to their cattle ; and though it seems like an incredible Arcadian description, he avers that the drivers neither beat nor cursed them, — a kind of unusual self-denial, which says much in their praise. The explanation is not distant ; for he tells us that in many of the villages of Maine, when he applied for brandy, rum, or whiskey, he could not obtain one drop ; insomuch that he, temperate as he is, could not help feeling as if the temperance amounted to excess.

He gives an interesting account of the habits of these hardy men. They go forth in parties to the spot, which they are soon to make desolate with their axes, and begin by providing a shelter for their cattle ; then they construct their own log hut, making bedsteads of the rudest cabinet work, in the corners, and a "*rung chimney*," as it was called by our forefathers, on one side, meaning a chimney formed, by securing together four ladders, filled in with clay between the rounds. In the neighborhood of the camp, they set their "*steel-traps*," "*dead-falls*," and "*spring-guns*," to catch the bears which are apt to prowl round such establishments, — guests unbidden and unwelcome, save that their skins answer good purpose for raiment, and their flesh is no contemptible food. The appearance of one of these woodmen is sufficiently odd, with a rackoon's skin over his head and brow, and moose-skin "*leg-gins*" reaching up to the girdle round his waist, stalking forth on snow-shoes, to cut down the noble pines, and destroy the growth of centuries in an hour. These trees are sawn into measured logs, and drawn by the cattle, to be left on the ice of the rivers ; so that when the winter breaks up, they may be ready to float down the stream.

When the labor of the season is completed, they devote themselves to pleasures ; not, however, of the unprofitable kind, as the deer, bears, sables and martens, will bear witness ; the moose hunt, also, is recommended to them by the dignified associations of hardship and danger ; this large and powerful animal makes his way through snows several feet in depth, faster than the hunters can follow him on their snow-shoes. A veteran hunter knows the direction in which to pursue them, by the marks of their teeth on the branches, left in browsing ; these are found more distinct and frequent, as he draws near them ; but the moose have senses so acute, that before the hunter can reach them, they have taken the

alarm and moved away. They have surprising strength and activity in overcoming obstacles in their flight ; when hard pressed, they will turn and defend themselves with great fury. Mr. Audubon's party took a young one, which was so exhausted, that it made no opposition when it was led to the camp ; but on the next day, it was so powerful and violent, that it was found impossible to preserve it alive. The common deer, which but a few years ago were found in Massachusetts, are now hardly seen in New England, except in Maine, and the northern parts of New Hampshire.

The newspapers of the last winter gave us an example of the danger to which these lumberers are sometimes exposed, from the burning of their camps ; and Mr. Audubon has given us an account, as he received it from the lips of a forester, of one of these conflagrations of the woods. They are sometimes thought to be kindled by Indians ; others ascribe them to the friction of dry trees upon each other ; but where so many fires are made, and this element is treated as cavalierly as it generally is in new countries, it is not wonderful that these accidents should abound, since insects often destroy trees in vast numbers, and leave their dry remains in a fit state to receive the flame. This man, with his family, was awaked one night by the outcry of their cattle, and starting from their beds, saw the glare and heard the crackling of the fire ; they arose and fled for life on their horses ; but the flames pursued so fiercely, that they could feel the withering heat ; their only resource was to gain a lake, and secure themselves on the lee side of it ; there they released their horses, which they never saw again, and threw themselves down among the rushes on the water's edge. The frightened wild beasts dashed into the water, swam across to the place where they were, and stood still at their side. Perhaps no condition in life can be imagined, more full of horror and dismay than this, and yet it is not uncommon in the forest regions of our country.

Many of the logs sent down by the lumberers do not reach their destination ; they linger, in tangled heaps, within the banks of the stream, where they are suffered to remain, till the miller has done his office upon those that have reached him. Mr. Audubon has given an animated account of the operation, by which these wayfarers are brought down. Vast numbers of them were lying in the gorge of a stream, which, though broad and powerful in the spring, was then shrunk to

the centre of its dusty bed, and had left the logs white in the sun. A dam was made at the outlet of another gorge above, which slowly filled itself with the diminished waters of the stream, and formed a broad sheet of water, a mile in length, with a depth of ten feet. When it was filled, the temporary dam was torn away, and the waters were suffered to pass into the gorge choked with logs below. They flowed out with conscious power; presently, a slow, ponderous motion was seen, as if a monster beneath was struggling to throw off a weight; then, the logs rose in masses, lifting, crashing, and dashing each other aside, some springing into the air, others diving under the roaring tide, till at last the waters bore all away, cleaving some into splinters, and striking others against the banks, with a noise that resounded like thunder. He could compare it to nothing but the confusion of a battle, with the roar of cannon, the shouts of the victorious, and the groans of the dying. It gave him a profound and tremendous impression of the force of the waters.

Mr. Audubon, when he left New Brunswick, proceeded on St. John's river. He and his party were landed at Woodstock, a youthful settlement, and went by land over an unpromising road, to Houlton, in Maine. He remained for a day or two at that military station, laboring in his vocation, though with small success. Of the road cut by the garrison through the woods from Houlton to Bangor, Mr. Audubon speaks in high terms, describing it as one of the best turnpikes in the Union. In one place, where it was unfinished for some miles, he met with difficulties and delays, which made him sensibly feel the advantage of such a thoroughfare. But when he came in sight of the Penobscot river, all the hardships of the way were forgotten in the view of the glorious landscape before him. Canoes, filled with Indians, were plying in every direction, scaring the game from the broad, bright waters. The eagle and fish-hawk were floating over it, on their motionless wings; the rich colors of early autumn were over all the fields, and mountains rose in the distance, an appropriate boundary for the scene.

This tour to New Brunswick, which most men would consider of itself a tolerably extensive journey, was to him only a preparation for one. He had always been desirous of visiting the northern regions, in which so many birds which pass through New England, fix their summer abodes. Not to

speaking of the geese, which seem, like the vessel whose fate Mr. Balwhidder commemorates, to "sail north into utter darkness," there are many interesting birds which pay us a flying visit in our gardens, as they hurry to their arctic home. Such is the fox-colored sparrow, which sings us a farewell just before he goes, to which we have often listened, wondering if any sound in nature was ever half so sweet. The tree-sparrow, also, with their inseparable friends, the snow-birds; when they linger so long with us, what attraction is it which forces them away at last? There are many questions of the kind which cannot be answered, except by one who goes himself to explore the recesses of their polar home; a voyage to Labrador was therefore indispensable, and the purpose was hardly sooner said than done.

While his eldest son went to England to superintend the publication of the work, Mr. Audubon went to Eastport, where he engaged a fast-sailing vessel, and made preparations for his voyage. To leave no moment unemployed, he took advantage of the cruise of one of our revenue cutters, to visit the Bay of Fundy. This was in May, when nature was just waking from her wintry sleep. He was in raptures, when he was once more in motion, and it is curious to observe, what an ornithological aspect his favorite taste gives to most of his beautiful descriptions. As they passed under the cliffs of the island of Grand Menan, "the prudent raven spread her pinions, launched from the crag, and flew away before us; the golden eagle soaring aloft, moved majestically in wide circles; the guillemots set on their eggs on the shelvy precipices, or plunging in the water, dived and rose again at a great distance; the broad-breasted eider duck covered her eggs among the grassy tufts; on a naked rock, the seal basked lazily, its sleek sides glittering in the sunshine; while shoals of porpoises were swiftly gliding through the waters around us, showing that though doomed to the deep, their life was not devoid of pleasure. Far away stood the bold shores of Nova-Scotia, gradually fading in the distance, of which the grey tints beautifully relieved the wing-like sails of many a fishing bark." But on landing, the prospect was still more to the purpose. On White-Head islands, he found the nests of gulls on almost every tree of a wood that covered several acres. "What a treat, reader, was it, to find birds of this kind, lodged in fir trees and sitting comfortably on their eggs!"

At another time he sailed in the revenue cutter's tender, the "Fancy," a name that seems to have inspired his descriptions. We do not mean that anything is overdrawn or over-colored; we refer to that wild delight which the sight of nature, in her happiest aspects, awakens in such minds as his. It seems to him as if the "old wives" that covered the bay, were cackling a welcome, and cormorants and gulls appeared as if they wanted nothing but words, to offer their services to pilot him into Head-Harbor bay. In the morning, the delightful trills of the winter-wren, the red-squirrel "smacking time with his chops," the clear notes of the robin, the rolling melody of the rosebreast, filled him with such enthusiasm, that he burned with the thirst of knowledge, and longed to learn from their own lips, what every one could teach of the wondrous works of Heaven. When he saw the water birds, towering on firm and graceful wing, away to regions where none have followed, he longed to "take the wings of the morning," and pursue them to the lands where the presence of man has never yet disturbed their quiet abodes. It is such imaginations as this, that warm the heart of the lover of nature; the world at large may have little sympathy with them; in fact, may not understand them; and yet these are the "maintaining power," which enables men to go through with hard enterprises and memorable deeds.

Mr. Audubon had the opportunity of verifying the accounts given of the tides of the Bay of Fundy, which he could not believe without the sight. At Windsor, in Nova Scotia, he sat on the bank of the river, about eighty feet above its bed, which was almost dry. Many vessels lay in this sandy wilderness, where it seemed as if no water could ever come to float them. The next morning, he watched the rising of the tide, and ascertained that it rose at the rate of three feet in ten minutes, or eighteen in the hour. At high water, the surface was sixty, five feet above the bed of the river; and on looking for the vessels which he had seen the evening before, he was told that most of them had sailed with the night tide.

Mr. Audubon found some things even in Labrador to interest him, apart from his professional researches: and soon had occasion to make a remark, which we have not the hardihood to deny. "Go where you will," he says, "if a shilling is to be had, you may expect to find some individuals in search of it." The first of these adventurers that he discovered, was a French-

man, who had established himself in a small island, separated from the main land by a narrow channel. He saw this person with his telescope engaged in kneeling before a cross in the attitude of prayer. Mr. Audubon visited the island, and asked the man why he chose that place for his devotions. He replied, that in spring and summer he prayed fronting the ocean, because that element supplied him with food. In winter, for a similar reason, he prayed fronting the mountains, from which the deer came down. Mr. Audubon thought his answer reasonable, and went with him to his hut, which was formed of stones plastered with mud, and thatched with weeds and moss. Eight Esquimaux dogs formed his family. The stranger kindly welcomed him to this mansion, the fragrance of which was overpowering, and went away; but soon returned with a face expressive of horror and dismay. It seemed that some "egggers," or other knaves, had discovered his barrel of rum, which he had hidden in a sequestered spot, and, engaged doubtless in the service of the Temperance Society, had conveyed it entirely away. So true it is that there is no escaping from chance and changes. But the unfortunate man, even in this moment of bereavement, with tears in his eyes, declared that for ten years, the time which he had resided here, collecting skins, he had met with no affliction that would bear a moment's comparison with this irreparable loss of his rum.

Proceeding further along the coast, he came to another resident of a higher order, who had come to this inhospitable region in search of fortune. He was a gentleman in his manners, with a wife and children. He said that he had no relish for the world, and that he lived out of the reach of lawyers, taxes and all exactions. As for his children, he intended that they should live and die in the country, and such being their destination, he could teach them all that they needed to know. But wherever man is, there is trouble: even his repose was disturbed by fishermen and egggers, whom he abominated; he felt no joy in the visits of the navigators, who bought his salmon, seal-skins and oil, and supplied him in return with the necessaries of his chosen life. At Bras-dor, a distance of seventy miles, they found the brother of this recluse, who was also weary of the world, of which he had seen much, and resided in this secluded place with his wife and children. The lady descanted upon the fine arts, as exhibited in certain prints upon the walls; Mr. Audubon was out of patience with her

pretension ; but he should have considered, that these were the finest in all the country, and that, if they were satisfied with works which cost a shilling, it was useless to go to Dresden or Florence for wonders of art, which they could neither value nor understand. She regretted very much that she could not entertain him with music, in which she greatly delighted ; her instrument had been sent to Europe to be repaired ; but from her enthusiastic description of it, it was evidently a hand-organ. She admired it, because it was played with a winch, and because without much instruction in the art, her children soon became interesting and able performers. The visitors were disposed to smile ; but truly, we think that the instrument was chosen with great discretion, and might be introduced even in more southerly latitudes, with manifest advantage. When we see the many pale, tired and tuneless children, who are compelled to belabor a piano for years, in hopes that music, which can "create a soul, under the ribs of death," will call into existence a voice and ear where nature has provided none, we do think, that it would be a wise and happy exchange, to take an instrument, which will produce the harmony ready-made, such as it is, and leave hours and years of valuable time for things which are now sacrificed to this accomplishment. Where there are natural gifts, they should by all means be cultivated ; but we see no advantage in teaching the lame to dance, nor the daughters of discord to sing. It may be true that all can be made singers ; and so far as the power can be cultivated to any good purpose of use or pleasure, it should be done : but we fancy, that, after all, though the peacock and sea-gull are allowed to have voices, they are not the birds to which we shall go for melody, when the baltimore or the red bird is nigh. The lady, however, had virtues more substantial than accomplishments, and her husband lived a quiet, busy and inoffensive life. His name was in good odor through the whole region ; not so his establishment ; the carcasses of fifteen hundred seals lay in a heap near his mansion, sending forth a fragrance which would have drowned all the perfumes of Araby the blest. Mr. Audubon derived from it a conclusive argument in favor of the eyes, and fatal to the pretensions of the nose ; since, had the vultures possessed the sense of smell, in as great perfection as some naturalists believe, they would have hurried to Labrador, rejoicing, from all parts of the United States, in which they are found.

While at Labrador, Mr. Audubon had an opportunity of seeing the cod-fishing, which is carried on with so much vigor. He had been astonished at the numbers of fish which he saw in Florida; but here they were far exceeded. The business is laborious to the men who are engaged in it, and their wages are proportionally high. The hours of rest on any of the week days, do not much exceed three in the twenty-four. At three in the morning the cook has the breakfast ready for the master and the crew; immediately after, they proceed in boats to the fishing grounds, taking with them their dinner already prepared; there, they employ themselves till their boat is laden almost to the water's edge. When they return to the vessel, they count the fish as they throw them on board; this ceremony is repeated as often as the boat is filled, which is generally once in each half of the day. The fish are cleaned upon the deck, cast into the hold to be salted, and thus, six experienced men dispose of what the other six catch in the course of the day. They afterwards take them to the shore, where they dry them in the sun, either on scaffolds made for the purpose, or on the bare surface of the rocks. The life of a Labrador fisherman is not one of indolence and ease. In midsummer, they sometimes throw out seines to catch their fish as they are chasing the smaller fish to the shores. In proof of their numbers, Mr. Audubon mentions, that the young men of his party often caught codfish alive with their hands, and large trouts with a mackerel hook, suspended by a line from their gun-rods; and if two of them walked knee-deep along the rocks, holding a handkerchief by the corners, they swept it full of capelings. The men engaged in this hardy employment are generally well repaid for their labor. He tells us that he has known those who were in independent circumstances, only ten years after they went their first voyage as boys; but they still continued to resort to the fishing, liking its exertion better than idleness at home.

But the account of Mr. Audubon's expeditions is so entertaining, that we had almost forgotten the purpose for which they were made. In Florida, he lived among the ibises, herons and pigeons, and had the best opportunity of studying their habits. In Labrador, he became acquainted with the summer plumage of various water birds, and their modes of breeding. The results of these tours will not fully appear, till the next volume, which, in consequence of the solicitation of

various persons, will contain the water birds. His own plan was, as set forth in his prospectus, to go through with the land birds first. It is a matter of very little importance in itself; but such suggestions from abroad are very embarrassing, because they interfere with the arrangement which he had adopted in his own mind; and which, if not the best, certainly has the advantage of being the most familiar to him.

But let us see what he has added to our former knowledge, on this interesting subject. And here we would remark, that we honor him for his readiness to make acknowledgments for information afforded him by others, engaged in the same pursuit. To be grateful for services, hospitality, and aid, is one thing; to be warm in acknowledgment of information received, is another; and naturalists, like other men, are apt to feel like the monk of the middle ages, who, when told that many of the good things in his book, had been said by the ancients before him, replied, in wrath, "*pereant, qui nostra ante nos dirissent.*" Mr. Audubon takes pleasure in stating that he was indebted, not only for many important facts, but some new discoveries, to his friend, the Rev. Mr. Bachman, of Charleston, South Carolina. One of these, is the *Sylvia Bachmanii*, first made known to the world in this collection. It was discovered by Mr. Bachman, in July, 1833. He described it as a lively, active bird, gliding among thick branches, occasionally mounting on the wing and seizing insects in the air, in the manner of a fly-catcher. Others have since been seen in the same neighborhood; so that we may, at some future time, receive a full description of its habits, which are now entirely unknown. The name of this bird was quite appropriately given. To have one's name thus attached to a natural object, and engraven in the world of nature, is, of all honors, the most enduring. It should not be lightly bestowed, and there are none to whom it so properly belongs, as to those who have distinguished themselves in this particular science; there are certainly those who deserve it.

A species of finch has also been discovered by Mr. Bachman, in the salt marshes of Carolina, and with his approbation, Mr. Audubon gave it the name of McGillivray's finch; in this, he did not transgress the rule stated above, since the gentleman thus honored, possesses a thorough knowledge of this science, and according to Mr. Audubon, no mean authority in such matters, is unquestionably the best of all portrayers

of the feathered race. This bird does not appear in company with the description. It was sent to London for the purpose, but did not arrive in season ; it must now be delayed, till the appearance of the fourth volume.

Mr. Audubon discovered a new species of finch in Labrador, to which he gave the name of "Lincoln's," in compliment to one of the young gentlemen who went with him in his northern expedition, and who was so fortunate as to shoot it. Going forth, one morning, into one of the small valleys which are found here and there in that country, Mr. Audubon heard the notes of this bird, resembling those of the wood-lark and canary united, and forming a melody that was new to his ears. He immediately gave chase to it, which was difficult, on account of its wildness ; but though he succeeded in gaining the bird, he could not discover its nest. Where this bird passes the winter, is unknown. Mr. Audubon never met with it in the southern states, though he has seen specimens in the collection of William Cooper, Esq., of New York, which were found in the vicinity of that city. The fourth of these new birds is an *Emberiza*, called "Townsend's," because discovered by Dr. Townsend, of Philadelphia.

Beside the warbler above-mentioned, Mr. Audubon has given to a new finch the name of Bachman. No one can say, that this naturalist is not entitled to the honor, inasmuch as he himself discovered the bird ; but to avoid the repetition, it might have been better to have bestowed the compliment elsewhere ; nor need he have looked far, for he acknowledges many obligations to the sister of this gentleman, who, it would seem, shares her brother's tastes. Mr. Bachman found this finch on the Edisto river. He had heard its note before, but took it for that of the ground-robin, or towhee-bunting, though the note is softer, and in other respects not precisely the same. The bird is easily discovered, and passes for the finest singer of all the family of sparrows ; no search has yet been able to trace it to its nest.

But the list of Mr. Bachman's discoveries is not completed. In 1833, he discovered another warbler, near the Edisto river. To this, Mr. Audubon has attached the name of Swainson, in honor of a distinguished naturalist, who has traversed a large portion of our country.

The Carolina titmouse is one of his own discoveries. The print of this little bird had been distributed among his sub-

scribers, before he found that it was not the same with the *Parus bi-color* of the middle states. When he was at Eastport, in May, 1833, an officer of the army brought him a titmouse, which seemed to him larger than the southern bird of the same name; and on inquiring carefully into the subject, he ascertained that they were specifically distinct. This new kind is found only in the south; the other is found in the northern, but abounds most in the middle states. They differ, also, in their habits, the Carolina titmouse being a more retiring bird than our peto, as he is sometimes called, from the peculiar sound of his song.

The list of new species is closed with the wood-wren, a bird with which Mr. Audubon became acquainted in Maine. It had often been seen, but was supposed to be one of the kinds which are familiarly known. The notes, however, differ considerably from those of the house-wren, and other differences appear, on a comparison of the two. They breed in hollow logs in the woods, and seldom approach the farms; a point in which they are exceedingly unlike the house-wren, who, with that easy composure, which is so unjustly thought to be a part of the New England character, makes himself perfectly at home, wherever he may be. Of these eight additions to the birds of America, Mr. Audubon claims the honor of discovering but three; and evidently takes as much pleasure in setting forth the success of others, as if it were his own. This is well; there is no greater proof of conscious poverty of merit, than to be avaricious of praise; and no one, who cannot rejoice in the honor of others, ever deserves to have any honor of his own.

Mr. Audubon has introduced several birds to our notice, which were never before known to visit the United States. At Key West, he first saw the pigeon, to which he has given the name of the island where he found it. The commanding officer there sent a serjeant with him, who happened to be familiar with the pursuit, and soon put him in possession of this treasure, which he gazed on again and again with perfect delight; he says, that the Egyptian pharmacopolist never embalmed the remains of a Pharaoh, with more reverence, than he paid to the corpse of this most beautiful of the doves. Though covered with moschetos, flowing with perspiration, and sinking with heat, he thought of nothing but the richness of his prize, and with a joy which was only abated by seeing

how difficult it would be to give any adequate representation of its brilliant, varying, metallic hues. This bird, the *Columba Montana*, had always been considered the same with the Zenaida dove. The blue-headed pigeon, *Columba Cyanocephala*, is another, which Mr. Audubon has added to the list of transient residents in the United States. Though some of them migrate every year from Cuba to Florida, they are seldom seen, on account of the deep thickets in which they reside. He saw a pair of them near the water ; but on approaching them, they escaped to the bushes. He afterwards searched for a whole day, in a place where fishermen and wreckers said they were more abundant, but not an individual could he see. He saw a pair which had been caught when young, on the "Mule Keys ;" so that the fact is established, that they are embraced within the limits of our ornithology.

It was never generally known that the *Caracara*, or Brazilian-eagle, comes within our boundaries, till Mr. Audubon published it ; though Dr. Strobel informed him, that this bird undoubtedly breeds in Florida. He saw it first, flying at a great elevation, and, convinced that it was new to him, determined to watch its motions. He was not long kept in suspense ; for the bird proceeded to a dead horse, on which some vultures were regaling themselves, and without much exchange of civilities, made one of the dinner party. But hungry though it was, it did not lose its caution. He fired on it without effect, but did not succeed in securing it till two days after. It differs most from the American vultures, in its power of carrying its prey in its talons. Mr. Audubon found it no easy matter to represent the plumage of these birds. In any climate the plumage loses its brightness soon after the bird dies ; but in those warm regions, the colors will almost entirely fade, before the most rapid hand can paint them.

In one of the Florida keys, Mr. Audubon first formed an acquaintance with the *Muscicapa Dominicensis*, or pipiry fly-catcher. This bird comes from Cuba to Florida in the spring, and would probably have been observed in the United States before, had it not been mistaken for the king-bird, which it resembles in appearance, manners, and the way of building its nest. Mr. Audubon gives an example of the necessity of paying proper regard to the statements of others. Report was made to him and Mr. Bachman, by a young gentleman of Charleston, that he had seen a pair of fly-catchers in the

college yard, different from any which he had ever observed before. He requested them to come to the spot, where they might see both the birds and their nest. They paid little regard to his first account, but after a time went to the place, where they found that the nest had been destroyed, and happening to see a common king-bird, rallied the youth upon his new discovery. Some time after, the birds formed another nest, and Mr. Bachman on visiting it, found it was the work of the bird in question. The anecdote is honestly recorded, to the credit of the youth, and for the warning of all the wise.

The Hudson's Bay titmouse is slightly described by Nuttall, in his valuable work, on the authority of others, he himself not having found it. Wilson, who knew it only by description, imagined it the same with our black-cap or chickadee. Mr. Audubon ascertained that it breeds in the state of Maine, and is, therefore, one of our citizens ; but he never could find it, till his visit to Labrador. There, he was so fortunate as to discover the bird and its nest. The nest was in the hollow of a small decayed stump, not more than three feet from the ground ; it was composed of fur, so ingeniously matted, that it seemed like the work of human art. This species is more common in Newfoundland than in Labrador ; it is found in Maine, but no one has yet been seen so far south as Massachusetts.

Again and again has it been said, that only one species of humming-bird ever visits the United States ; but lo ! here is another. But the world may be forgiven for not having known that there were two, since Audubon himself never seems to have met with the mango humming-bird, as it is called ; the one that now figures in his plates and descriptions. This species was communicated to him by Mr. Bachman, who received a specimen from Dr. Strobel, which he had brought from Key West. It was captured from a bush, where it was sitting, exhausted, perhaps, with its migratory flight. Whether it is numerous or not, Dr. Strobel had no means of ascertaining.

Thus there are five species of birds, which were previously known to exist in other countries, but not suspected to enter ours, which are ascertained by this unwearied observer, to be occasional visitors or residents in the United States. The mangrove-cuckoo might, perhaps, be included ; for though Nuttall described it, and gave it the name of *Coccyzus Seni-*

culus, he declares that he never saw it, and that it was admitted only on the authority of Vieillot. Mr. Audubon often noticed these birds at Key West, but took them to be the same with the common yellow-bill; when one was sent him by an officer, he discovered that it was not the common species, though it resembles it in many of its habits, particularly those in which it is least worthy of imitation. It feeds on the eggs of other birds, and builds a nest in the same slovenly manner, but is even more timid and shy. The fishermen and wreckers declared to him, that it went to the nest of the white pigeon, and destroyed the helpless young; a kind of trifling with life, which doubtless grieved the souls of those worthy men. But there is some reason to hope that the reproach is undeserved. Mr. Audubon, in his own researches, could find nothing to confirm it. To discover new species, or to ascertain these new facts, must be the thing wished for by him who was desirous of inventing new pleasures; we doubt whether any bloody triumph was ever so luxuriously enjoyed.

We must next take a view of the new facts which Mr. Audubon has established. He has exalted our crow to the dignity of a distinct species, and given it the name of *Corvus Americanus*. It has always been regarded and described as the same with the carrion-crow of Europe; but in this country, that name is wanted for the black vulture; and assuredly no creature can more eminently deserve it. Mr. Audubon considers our crow less in size than the European bird; this difference however, if it exists, is trifling: but the voice, the form of the tongue and the habits of the two, afford more important differences. Montague says of the *Corvus Corone*, that they keep in pairs all the year, seldom collecting in numbers, except to feed on some carcass or to roost in winter; this does not describe the American crows, which are a remarkably social people. He also says that he has seen a crow strike a pigeon dead from the top of a barn; in fact, his whole description gives the impression of a bird, more bold and less cautious than ours.

Mr. Audubon with his usual generosity pleads the cause of this unfortunate bird, which is exposed not only to the shot of idle boys, but to the acts of legislatures, and regularly receives the ominous benedictions of the farmer as often as the spring arrives; being compelled to bear the sins of the grackle in addition to his own; while the latter bird, saving himself by

turning evidence against his neighbor, builds his nest upon the high tree over the chimney, and riots undisturbed upon the fields and garden. The raven, which is the head of this sable family, has been placed by Mr. Audubon, at the head of the procession in his second volume; a more discreet file leader could not have been selected, though in point of beauty, it must be acknowledged, many others would have the advantage. The raven is a much larger and more powerful bird than the crow, and there is no tie of relationship or love between them. Wherever the ravens choose to reside, they give warning to the crows, that a change of air will be good for their constitutions; but, with a generosity unknown to human parties, civil, military or religious, they permit the crows to inhabit those regions which they do not want for themselves, and thus the whole country is parcelled out between them. These birds resemble each other in their familiarity and ease, when they are domesticated. The raven perhaps is the more desirable inmate of the two, since it treats its master like a friend; the crow too loves its master much, but its joke more: and nothing can exceed the troublesome ingenuity of the pranks, by which it taxes the patience of the household. The caution of the raven in protecting its young is most remarkable. On the coast of Labrador, Mr. Audubon discovered a nest, and he and his whole party attempted to shoot one of the proprietors, but in vain. One afternoon, he lay concealed under a pile of rocks for two hours; the young in the nest croaked for food, but no parent came; as soon as he was out of patience and had left the place, the female, in an instant was seen from the vessel, to go to the place to relieve her clamorous children. He observed that in the deepest fogs, these birds by their peculiar instinct, could move from any distance, straight toward their nest. Of the crow, Mr. Audubon says, that, "the state of terror in which he is always kept is enough to spoil the temper of any creature." We honor him for his humanity, but we fear it will be lifting up his voice in vain. We shall be satisfied, if we can see public opinion prevent the destruction of harmless birds. And much we wonder what that parent can be made of, who will suffer his child to destroy life and regard it as pleasure. If the boy have that taste, and the parent be disposed to indulge it, let him take the boy to a slaughter house, and there pay a sixpence for the privilege of knocking an ox in the head. If there be any sport in the case, it must

be greater in proportion to the size of the animal, and if such a propensity deserve to be cultivated, let it be indulged, where it can be of some service to men.

Mr. Audubon has pointed out the difference between the American golden-crested wren, *Regulus Tricolor*, as Nuttall has named it, and the *Regulus Cristatus* of Europe; showing that the former is longer, and differs also in its claws and bill. This bird breeds at Labrador, where he saw it feeding its young in August; common as it was there and in Newfoundland, he never was able to discover its nest. The family remain in a group, as they go to pass the winter in our southern and western states. In January, he saw great numbers of them in the woods near Charleston, and so careless were they of his presence, that he could go within two or three feet of them, without giving any alarm.

Mr. Audubon shows that the *Sylvia Palmarum* or palm warbler of Bonaparte, is the same with the *Sylvia Petechia* or yellow red-poll. That able naturalist, introduced it for the first time as a bird of the United States, saying that in winter, it abounds in the vicinity of St. Augustine; but Mr. Audubon maintains, that the true *Sylvia Palmarum* is never found within the limits of our republic. Nuttall had corrected the error of Bonaparte before, though in a quiet way, without note or comment; Mr. Audubon was for a long time persuaded that they were distinct species, and under that impression had attached the name to the sixty-third plate of the second volume; but Mr. Bachman convinced him that they were the same bird, with its plumage differing at different periods of its life.

The rough-legged falcon, *Falco Lagopus*, Mr. Audubon takes to be the same bird with the black-hawk, *Falco Niger* of Wilson; the difference in their markings, being ascribed to the time of life at which they were taken. And, to show how much the color of the bird might mislead us, he tells us that while he was in Boston, he received eight of these birds at one time, in consequence of a premium which he offered, and found that the plumage of no two of the number was the same, while there was no difference whatever in the more important signs by which the kind is determined. Bonaparte thought, that the effect of increasing knowledge on these subjects, would be to increase the numbers of species of birds already known; but such examples as this seem to show, that the effect will be different, and that many, which now stand apart in their dignity

of class and order, will hereafter be included in the same description. These birds were shot at the same time, in the same marsh, and their flight and attitudes were the same: it was observed that the dark ones were the most shy, which he thinks was owing to the circumstance that they were the oldest. This natural association and the perfect similarity of their voices, taken in connexion with the other circumstances, satisfied him that they were all of the same family of birds. The very specimen which Wilson described and painted as *Falco Niger*, is still in the Philadelphia collection, and as Mr. Audubon says, serves to show, that, apart from color, which is not much to be depended on, there is nothing to distinguish it from the rough-legged falcon.

Wilson was provoked with those who said that the American crossbill was only a variety of the European species; but Mr. Audubon, with due deference to his predecessor, firmly maintains that the American does not differ in any respect whatever from the European bird. He says that he has shot great numbers, and opened as many as sixty,—an examination which has resulted in his present conviction; but, knowing that he may be mistaken, after all his care, he invites his reader to go through a similar course of experiments if he will. The great American shrike, called by Bonaparte *Lanius Septentrionalis*, he, like Wilson, considers the same with the *Lanius Excubitor* of Europe. The singular practice for which this bird is remarkable, of impaling insects on sharp points of twigs and thorns, is a mystery, which he does not attempt to solve.

Mr. Audubon takes particular delight in the swallows, those “light-hearted wretches,” which are perpetually wheeling in their rapid and graceful circles, as if there were no such thing as care in the world. They sport together in perfect harmony all day, and what is a little remarkable, considering the quick temper of most birds, they assemble in perfect harmony at night, though so many are tenants of the same barn. Mr. Audubon describes their flight with great animation. “In fine calm weather,” he says, “their circuits are performed at a considerable elevation, with a lightness and ease that are truly admirable. They play over the river, the field or the city, with equal grace, and during spring and summer, you might imagine that their object was to fill the air around them with their cheerful twitterings. When the weather lowers, they move swiftly in tortuous meanderings over the meadows and through

the streets of the town ; they pass and repass, now close to the pavement, and now along the walls of the buildings, so rapid, that you can scarcely follow them with the eye. But try : — there she skims against the wind over the ruffled stream: up she shoots, seizes an insect, and wheeling round, sails down the breeze, with a rapidity, that carries her out of your sight almost in a moment.” Wilson combated the opinion, which regarded this favorite bird as the same with the chimney-swallow of Europe. He remarks, that there is some difference in their colors, and still more in their habits, the European kind confining itself to chimneys, while ours never selects those places for its nest. But Montague observes of this chimney-swallow, that, though in England the chimney is its favorite retreat, in Scotland it builds in barns, out-houses and straw-built sheds. White found their nests in the shaft of a deserted well, and Mr. Rennie remarks, that he had repeatedly seen them in the shafts of coal-pits, not at all dismayed by the presence of the workmen, who, fortunately for the birds, consider it unlucky to injure them. In Sweden, the chimney-swallow is equally indifferent as to the place where it builds ; so that nothing can be found in the place of their nest, to constitute a marked distinction of one kind from another. Our barn-swallow builds sometimes in old wells, and under bridges, as well as in sheds and barns, but never was known to make its nest in a chimney. Whatever the explanation may be, — and Mr. Audubon thinks it possible that they are prevented by the chimney-swift, a more powerful bird, — he does not admit that the *Hirundo Rustica* of Europe, differs from the barn swallow of our country.

Mr. Audubon remarks, that he saw these birds in flocks at St. Augustine at the beginning of December, but after the first frost, they had all disappeared. He believes that they pass the winter on the southern coast of the Gulf of Mexico, not going much farther south, for the want of proper food. He takes no notice of the ancient superstition, which maintained that they dived into the mud. It is a difficult matter to account for the numbers of these birds, which are found in mill-ponds and similar places, where they have evidently been drowned at nearly the same time. Montague observes, that once in spring, when the mercury had suddenly fallen to 42°, these birds were all missing. But he accidentally discovered a retreat, in which hundreds of them were collected, near a large pool, where they seemed to have found some insects for sub-

sistence, but were so exhausted, that they could hardly support themselves upon the wing. In our capricious climate, they must often be exposed to similar troubles. Such was the case in the cold weather at the early part of June in 1832. Almost all kinds of birds suffered more or less from cold, and consequent inability to supply themselves with food. In this state, the birds came in from the forests to the villages and farms, and the summer birds, particularly the scarlet tanager, were found dead in our gardens. The red-start, generally a shy and retiring bird, came on that occasion, day after day, to a twig, within three feet of the window where we were writing. The swallow is easily affected by cold, and perhaps would suffer more than any of our visitors by such changes; and changes of the kind abound, after their coming, in the beginning of May.

Mr. Audubon adds much to our knowledge of the habits of the barn-owl, which he does not consider precisely the same with that of Europe, though he says he can point out no specific marks of distinction. This elegant bird has been less known to science than to superstition. Its complaint from the ivy-mantled tower, and the dreary sound of the cry, which we so often hear in the stillness of night, have made it rather a subject of fear than of enlightened interest: but Montague, with whom it was domesticated, found it, instead of an evil genius, a familiar and affectionate friend of man. He bred an owl of this kind, a sparrowhawk, and a ring-dove together, and found that they lived in harmony, which was only broken by the pretensions of the ring-dove, which governed the rest, by virtue of being weaker and worse-tempered than the other two; a kind of despotism, which we did not know to exist among other animals, though it has prevailed for ages, in families of the human race. When he at last dismissed them, the owl was the only one which returned to visit him again. Wilson, diligent as he was in gaining knowledge, declares that he could get no account from his own researches or information of others, concerning the habits of this bird. Audubon has supplied information concerning its breeding, in which it is peculiar, particularly in respect to time. The European species breeds in March or April: he found the nest of the American at Charleston in the depth of winter, and was told that they bred at all seasons of the year.

When in Charleston, in October, 1833, he received information of a nest in the upper story of a deserted sugar-house.

It was lighted with windows, one of which had two panes broken. He approached the young, guided by the sound of their hissing, when the parent bird, discovering him at the distance of a few feet, glided silently through the aperture. The young were three in number, covered with a cream-colored down, which was beautifully clean. A cotton rat lay beside them, which must have been brought from a distance of three or four miles. On visiting them a month after, he found that their feathers were beginning to grow; the parent now supplied them with less food than formerly, and brought it only by night. This was on the 25th of November. On the 18th of January, he visited the place again, and found the young fledged, but still unable to fly. He has satisfied himself that this kind of owl lives entirely upon the smaller quadrupeds, — a subsistence which the ornithologist would consider more pardonable than the destruction of small birds, which it was supposed to use for food. But Audubon could never discover the trace of a single feather near the nests; the pellets, which they throw up after having swallowed their prey, were invariably composed of bones and hair. He has never seen any propensity in this bird to fish, whereas Nuttall gives the account of one which was known to steal gold-fish from a pond. It may, nevertheless, be true, that it resorts to birds and fish, when it cannot find a supply of its usual food. It is a little singular, that Mr. Audubon should never have heard from them any cry or note whatever; all ornithologists, as well as common observers, dwell much on their hollow scream; but he avers, that excepting the hissing, expressive of alarm, he has heard no sound proceed from any of the number. They are remarkable for the silence of their motions. In a room, their flight is so noiseless, that one finds them removed to the opposite side, without having heard the least sound from their wings.

Mr. Audubon has added much to our knowledge of the great crow black-bird, an inhabitant of the southern states, which was alluded to by Wilson, but not painted nor described; an omission which was probably owing to his desire to acquire more knowledge respecting it, before he published it to the world. Bonaparte, who supplied the defect, says but little concerning the habits of the bird; but Audubon gives a description full of interest and beauty. He describes it as matting in February, when the male delights in perching on the

topmost bough of a high tree, where his motions throw out all his variety of colors, glancing in the sun. The pair build, generally, in the island of a lake, where they refit the last year's nest, or hastily construct a new one, from twigs, grasses, and the long Spanish moss, that streams from every tree. But no sooner does the female begin to sit upon the eggs, than the males fly away, leaving to the females the whole charge of supporting and educating the young. It is a strange provision of nature. Why is it, that the male wild-turkey would destroy, not only the eggs, but the young themselves? Perhaps, in the case of the black-bird, which has a passion for eggs, the male emigrates, to be out of the way of temptation to destroy his own. And yet why wonder at such things in the lower animals, when you cannot go to any part of the civilized world, where you do not find, in abundance, widows with living husbands, and orphans with living fathers?

It would take too much time to say, how much Mr. Audubon has added to what was known concerning the architecture of birds; but one or two examples will show the difficulty which he encountered. He was desirous to inquire respecting the spruce-partridge, or Canada-grouse, which breeds in the state of Maine. Mr. Lincoln, of Dennisville, who afterwards accompanied him to Labrador, undertook to guide him to their favorite retreats; but after groping through tangled brushwood, over fallen trees, and through miry ponds, their advance contested at every step by armies of flies and moschettos, they were compelled to return at sunset, without having seen a single bird. He afterwards succeeded in reaching their breeding places, in the hacmatac woods, sinking every step or two in mud to the waist, his feet fast in the mire, and his body wedged between the trees. The birds delight in these inaccessible retreats, and hardly ever leave them; but when approached, they seem to be fearless, from their unacquaintance with the savage reputation which man bears among the feathered race. Bonaparte, who first noticed this bird in connection with our ornithology, described its eggs as varied with white, yellow, and black; Audubon says, that they are fawn-colored, and irregularly splashed with brown.

In his pursuit of the willow-grouse, he was exposed to similar trouble. In Newfoundland, he was giving chase to this bird, in an extensive miry flat, where one of the party sunk so deep that it was with the utmost difficulty he could be res-

cued by the others. They were covered from head to foot with black mud, and so exhausted, that they were obliged to sit down, every few yards, upon the damp sward, which threatened constantly to give way and let them down beyond human reach. These birds, both males and females, manifested the strongest attachment to their young; whenever they approached a covey, the parents would give battle in its defence, and attack the intruders with great violence, while the young were hiding themselves in the moss and leaves.

Mr. Audubon took much pains to become acquainted with the American goshawk, the *Falco Atricapillus* of Wilson, who suspected it to be the goshawk, though he called it by a different name. This bird is not common in the United States, but wherever it is found, is bold and spirited; in Maine, they have been known to descend to the door of the farmer, and to carry off his chickens and ducks before his eyes. He observed some of them near the Ohio river, engaged in chasing vast numbers of pigeons. One of them suddenly left the pursuit, to attack a flock of crow black-birds, which happened to be crossing the stream. The affrighted birds fled swiftly, gathering themselves into a mass so dense, that it resembled a black ball. The goshawk soon overtook them, and seizing one, strangled and dropped it, without suspending his flight. In the same way he made sure of several others, letting them drop into the stream. When the black-birds plunged into the woods, he gave over the pursuit, swept down to the water where his prey were floating, and taking them up singly, one after the other, carried them to the shore. This bird was one of those which were formerly used in falconry, a kind of amusement which has been consecrated by many lordly and chivalrous associations, though without them it would probably have stood on a level with cock-fighting. May we not hope that the time will come when men can find amusement for their idle hours, without requiring the torture and death of other creatures of God?

Mr. Audubon seems often to reproach himself for the severity which he employs in making these accessions of knowledge. He searched out the breeding habits of this species, and of the Mississippi-kite, both of which are described for the first time by him. In pursuit of the latter, he one day heard a prolonged cry of distress, which he traced to a dark, motionless thing, that seemed to have lodged on the branch of

a tree. It proved to be the young of this bird. As soon as he fired upon it, the old bird came and fed its young. He then fired again, but without success; and the parent, seeing the danger, gently took up the young one, and sailing through the air, deposited it in another tree. He could not help admiring the daring and affectionate action; still he fired again, and brought them both to the ground. After carefully hiding them, in order to take them on his return, he proceeded on his expedition; but when he came back to reclaim his prey, some marauder of the woods had destroyed them both. His punishment, he says, was deserved. Its nest, of which Nuttall professes himself entirely ignorant, was found in tall white-oaks and magnolias, formed of sticks, slightly put together, of Spanish moss, and dried leaves. Only one brood is raised in the season.

We have now, for the first time, an account of the breeding habits of the tree and the fox-colored sparrows, two beautiful wayfarers, which remain but little time with us, and yet are generally known. Who has not seen the rich brown of the latter, glowing in the setting sun; and who does not know the voice of its tender and plaintive farewell? Though they are so silent while with us, when they go to the northern regions they are overflowing with song. "Would that I could convey to your mind the effect which it produced on my feelings, when wandering on the desolate shores of Labrador! That I could intelligibly tell you, of the clear full notes of its unaffected warble, as it sat perched on the branch of some stunted fir! There, for hours together, was continued the delightful serenade, which kept me lingering near the spot. The brilliancy and clearness of each note, as it flowed through the air, were so enchanting, the expression and emphasis of the song so powerful, that I never tired of listening." During the breeding season, the plumage has a brighter color than with us. Its nest, which is large, is placed on the ground, amidst the moss or tall grass, and under a creeping fir, the branches of which entirely conceal it. The eggs are laid at the last of June, or the beginning of July. Mr. Audubon mentions the singular circumstance, that in an aviary in Charleston, some of these birds were killed, by what offender, it was for sometime difficult to discover; till, one day, a mocking-bird was seen to alight on one of them, and peck it in such a manner as to cause its death. A blue-jay had been suspected of the crime, but so

far from being the murderer, the jay was at length one of the victims. The eggs of this species do not answer to the description of Richardson, neither are those of the tree-sparrow brown, as represented by Nuttall; the latter are of a deep blue, so much resembling those of the chipping-sparrow, that it would be difficult to tell them apart.

If any one suppose, as men are apt to do respecting pursuits which they never tried, that such facts as the author of this great work supplies, are easily ascertained, the contents of this book will undeceive him; it is hard to verify matters of fact in an extensive library; it is harder still to ascertain them in the open volume of nature. At Camden, in New Jersey, he watched the movements of the warbling-vireo, a sweet little bird, whose note is admired by many, to whom its appearance is unknown. He saw two of them, evidently conversing on the subject of building in a poplar, and shortly after saw them making the frame-work of their nest, by disposing blades of grass in circles. On the second day, they began to weave in bits of hornet's nest and corn-husks, pushing them between the rows of grass, and there securing them. On the third day, they were absent; but on the fourth morning, he was awaked by their song, and saw them working extremely slender grasses within the frame. Wishing to know where they procured their materials, he followed them from tree to tree, toward a large meadow, where they drew the grass from an old hay-stack. This was done for two or three days. On the seventh, the female spread wool and horse-hair for the lining, and the eighth was devoted to smoothing the inside. On the fifteenth, five little birds were standing on the borders of the nest; and on the sixteenth, they quitted their home. All this time he had constantly observed their habits and motions. The feelings of the reader would probably be expressed in one of Dr. Johnson's courteous remarks to a gentleman, who took much time in speaking of a flea. "Sir, if a thing so small has taken all this time, a larger animal would probably take you a year." Still, these facts are well worth the labor and the time which it costs to ascertain them; they afford materials for some of the most inspiring and intellectual contemplations on which the mind can dwell.

But this devotion of Mr. Audubon to his favorite pursuit, must make immense demands upon the physical constitution. He exposes himself to all weather, in all climates, caring neither

for the freezing cold nor the burning sun ; and when he has gained the object of his hot pursuit, sits down to study and draw it with an intenseness of application, which is even more exhausting than his active exertions. In Boston, he secured a noble specimen of the golden eagle. By the advice of his friend, Dr. Parkman, he attempted to destroy its life with the fumes of burning charcoal, to avoid injuring his plumage, and to spare him unnecessary pain. After the bird had been exposed to its effect for hours, Mr. Audubon opened the door of the little apartment in which the experiment was tried, and though the air was perfectly suffocating, saw the eagle "with his bright, unflinching eye, turned towards him as lively and vigorous as ever." When he had succeeded in destroying it, for which purpose he was obliged to resort to other means at last, Mr. Audubon proceeded to draw it, and engaged in the employment so unremittingly, that he brought on a spasmodic affection, which nearly cost him his life. But, after devoting so many years to this pursuit, we may suppose that less demand will in future be made upon his exertions. He is not the man who will ever rest, but he may continue the employment of his life less laboriously ; and when the work succeeds, as succeed it will, may find leisure to enjoy his well-earned and lasting fame.

We trust that many of our readers will soon be familiar with the descriptions of Mr. Audubon ; the illustrations can be in the hands of but few ; but this is of the less consequence, as the originals are to be seen by all, and the great proportion of them save us the trouble of seeking them, by coming directly to us. The biography alone, will answer every purpose of aid, to those who desire to investigate the subject for themselves. We consider it fortunate, that our ornithology should have fallen into the hands of such a man : his qualifications are great, and his success has been in the same proportion. A man of the world in his manners, his courtesy secures all the information which others can give, and makes them regard it as a privilege to render him all the aid in their power. A lover of nature in his feeling, he dives fearlessly into the deepest forests, and wanders alone over the most savage regions of our country ; intelligent and observing, he discerns easily and rapidly whatever the naturalist desires to know : an accomplished artist, he strikes out with a bold pencil the spirited attitude and lifelike colors of the subjects of his art. And he has one advantage

which is greater than all beside. He loves the pursuit for its own sake. In former days, he offered to Wilson the valuable materials he had collected ; and when the offer, fortunately for the world, was declined, he supplied information to Bonaparte, Wilson's able successor. It is evident, therefore, that he entered upon the pursuit because he loved it, and not with the view of erecting this monument to his own fame. Indeed, mere ambition would have fainted and despaired under the many difficulties which he had to encounter. Nothing, short of an enthusiastic passion for his pursuit, would have borne him up to the eminence on which he now stands. He suffers nothing to draw him aside from it, and never disdains the most trifling information ; his only enjoyment seems to consist in gaining accessions of knowledge. We remember his asking letters from us, to some gentlemen of a certain place distinguished for intelligence and cultivation. We supplied them, with the assurance that he would highly enjoy the society in question. He replied, that he did not doubt it, but his object was, not to enjoy pleasant society, but to see a stuffed owl.

It is only as a literary production, that we undertake to criticise the work ; for on the subject of American birds, he doubtless knows more than any other man ; and they who come to criticise, will retire to be instructed. His style, though there is a foreign aspect about it, is expressive, animated, and often very eloquent, particularly in the description of fine scenery. It is a style perfectly natural, and not at all in bondage to any rules of art : but it tells us precisely what he means to say, and when he would make us share his own feelings, is evidently dictated and inspired by the heart. He has not the solemn enthusiasm of Wilson ; who found little sympathy in those about him, and therefore lived in a world of his own. Audubon's passion for the science, is, as might be expected in a man familiar with the best aspects, indeed all the aspects of life, more easy, graceful, and such as others know better how to share. Perhaps this volume will not seem so attractive as the former, to most readers : but if it should be so, the explanation will be, that it is the second not the first. The public often uncharitably require, that the works of a popular writer should increase in interest, at least in geometrical progression : and if this unreasonable demand is not answered, as it of course never can be, they are apt to say, that he has fallen below himself : but, we consider this volume as equal to the

first, which in our opinion is sufficient praise for any man's ambition, and we shall look forward with impatience to its successor.



ART. X. — *Webster's Speeches.*

Speeches and Forensic Arguments. By DANIEL WEBSTER.
2 Vols. 8vo. Boston. 1835.

THE first of these volumes appeared five years ago; the second is just published. Nothing perhaps illustrates more strongly the affluence of modern literature, than the feelings, with which such a work as this is received, by the reading public of Europe and America. We do not, of course, intend to say, that the publication of volumes like these is an event of very familiar occurrence; or that the frequency of their appearance is such, as seriously to weaken the impression, which they ought to produce on the minds of an enlightened age. Still, however, when we recall the names of Irving and Channing, on this side of the Atlantic; of Mackintosh, of Scott, of Canning, on the other side, and of others on both sides, not unworthy associates of these leading minds of the English language, in the present generation, we shall readily admit, that the appearance of volumes, like these before us, — masterpieces as they are of forensic and parliamentary eloquence, — is an event, which may reasonably be calculated upon regularly, from time to time, as an ordinary occurrence. We mean to say, that such is the present lofty state of civilization, so much mind is in high and constant action, that without going out of the circle of the English language, there is annually laid before the reading world, some one production at least, that may be called classical; something equal to the works of the first class of any age. We do not mean that a new Plato Demosthenes, or Newton appears every twelvemonth, on the stage. It must be left alone to time to bring to his unerring test, the merits of this as of preceding generations. But this we may safely say, — that in addition to whole branches of science, unknown to antiquity, — there are appearing every year, in almost every department of learning, works, which, if they had come down